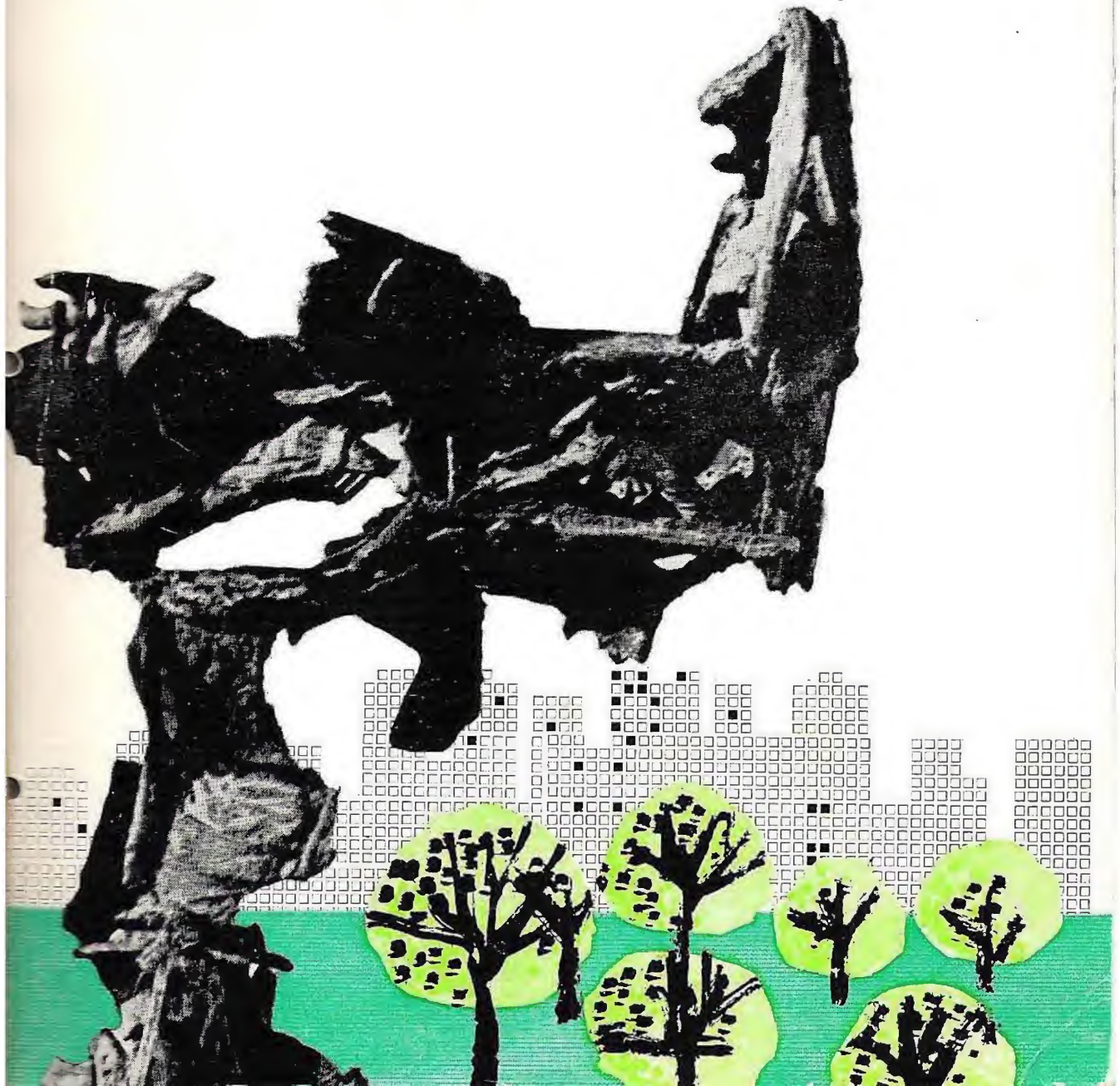


Spotlight on the future

20,000,000 Dutchmen in 40,000 square kilometres



Spotlight on the future

How 20,000,000 Dutchmen will live in 40,000 square kilometres

by R. Idenburg

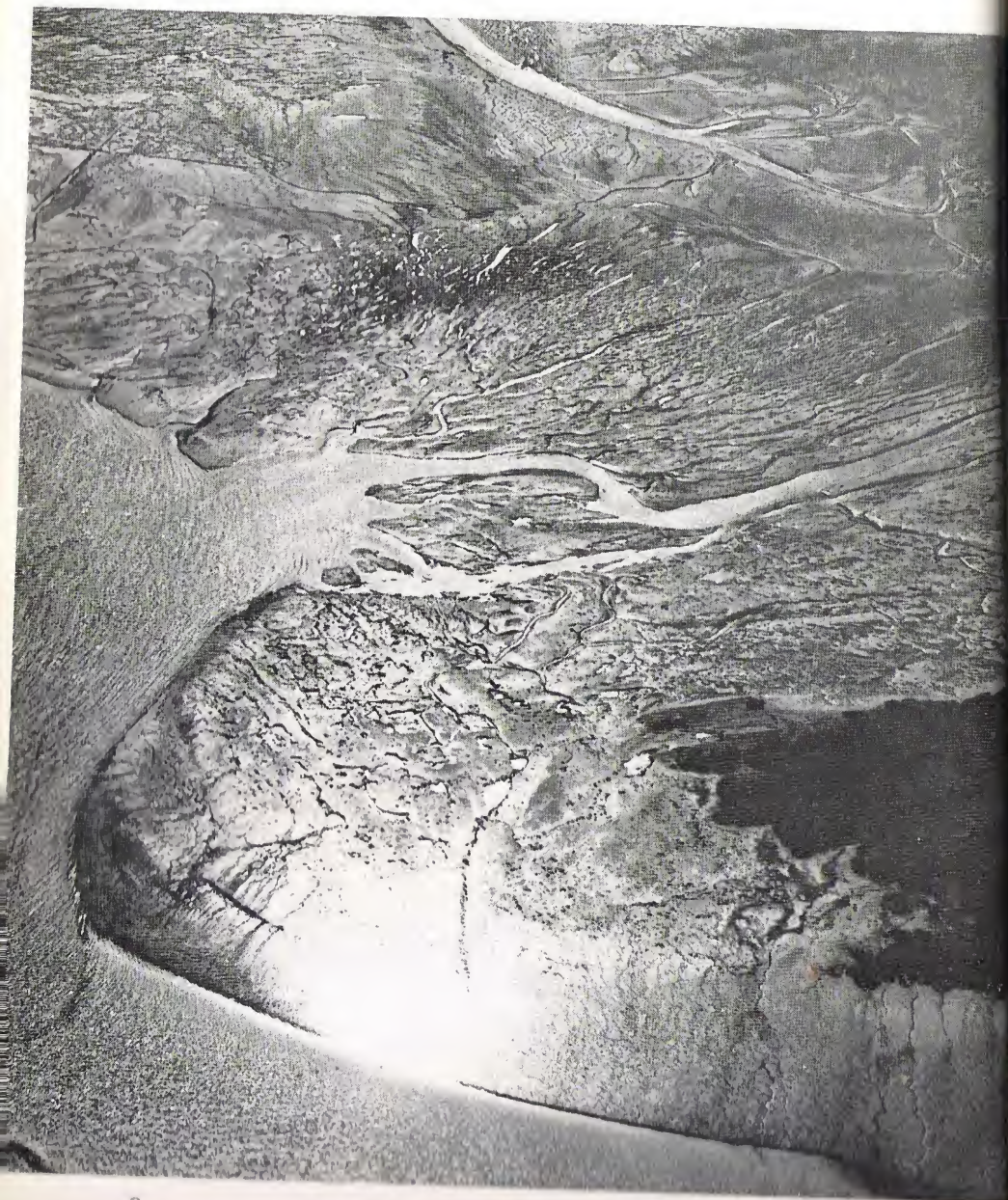
Errata:

P. 44, top right:
map should be replaced
by the one printed alongside.



P. 59, top right:
Insert map printed
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The quotations at the head of each chapter are taken from the Second Report on Physical Planning in the Netherlands which appeared in 1966 and in which the Netherlands Government set forth the outlines of national planning policy. This report was adopted by Parliament.

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The landscape of the Netherlands with neighbouring countries.

to be reclaimed

open landscape, open areas with
length and width of over 1½ km

wooded landscape, open area with
length and width of under 500 m

backdrop landscape, open space with
length under app. 1½ km and width
over app. 500 m

residential centres



The low level of most of the Netherlands and the constant threat posed by water have forced the people for centuries to plan their use of land.

Land is a scarce commodity in the Netherlands, and the growth of the population and increasing prosperity are making it more and more so. It is impossible to create more land. Supply and demand cannot be balanced by the usual economic processes. It is therefore essential to take great care in managing the space that is available.

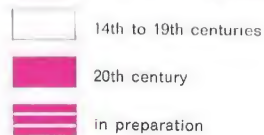
Obviously you can create more land by reclaiming the sea. The illustrations show that. It is also possible to do the opposite. But that does not change the amount of space available. It merely changes slightly the way in which the land is used. How to make the most of limited space, the efficient use of land, is one of the great problems confronting the Netherlands.

We need to use our land efficiently, because the population is rising fast. By the year 2000 there may be eighteen million or even twenty million people in the Netherlands, compared with over thirteen million at the moment. It is practically certain that the demands all these millions of Dutchmen will make on their environment and housing, in other words on society as a whole, will make heavier demands on the available land than the figures alone would lead us to expect.

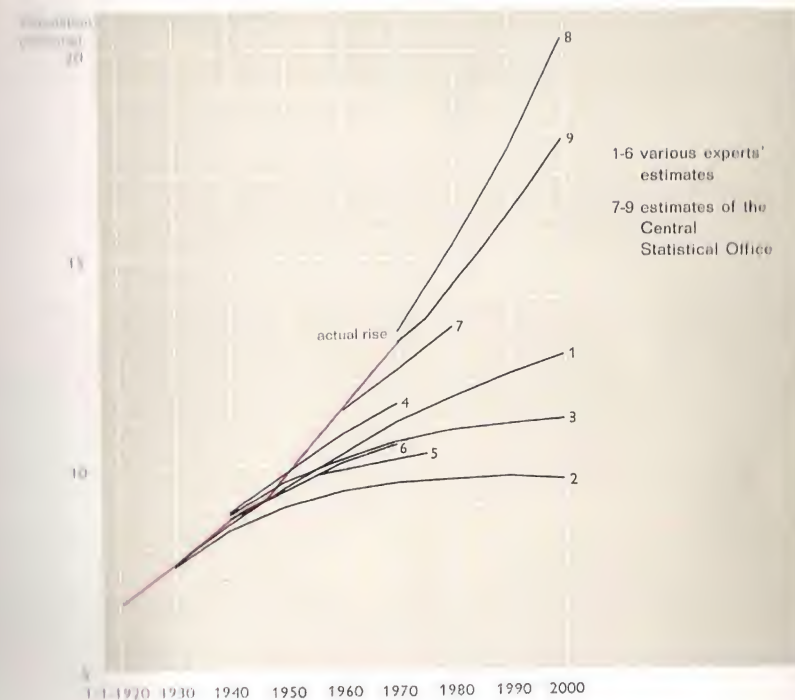
No single company with an eye on the future does without planning. Future needs are carefully gauged. Short and long term production schedules are drawn up. Being able to cope with future demands in good time is the hallmark of a successful enterprise. The Netherlands authorities would be failing to make proper use of the country's land if they did not take similar measures to cope with widening horizons. Some planning will therefore have to be done, future needs will have to be taken into account, and measures will have to be taken to ensure as rational a use as possible of the land available. This must be based on scientific research. At the same time unforeseeable social developments must not be prevented in advance by adopting a plan of development which is too inflexible.

Of course physical planning by the authorities cannot be compared as such with the planning undertaken by private

Reclamation down the centuries.



Population growth and projections.



companies. The development of society does not lend itself to fixed plans or technical blueprints, but an attempt must be made to let it develop in the right directions. Land in the Netherlands is too precious to waste. Thus, and in no other way, should we understand the concept of 'the efficient use of land'.

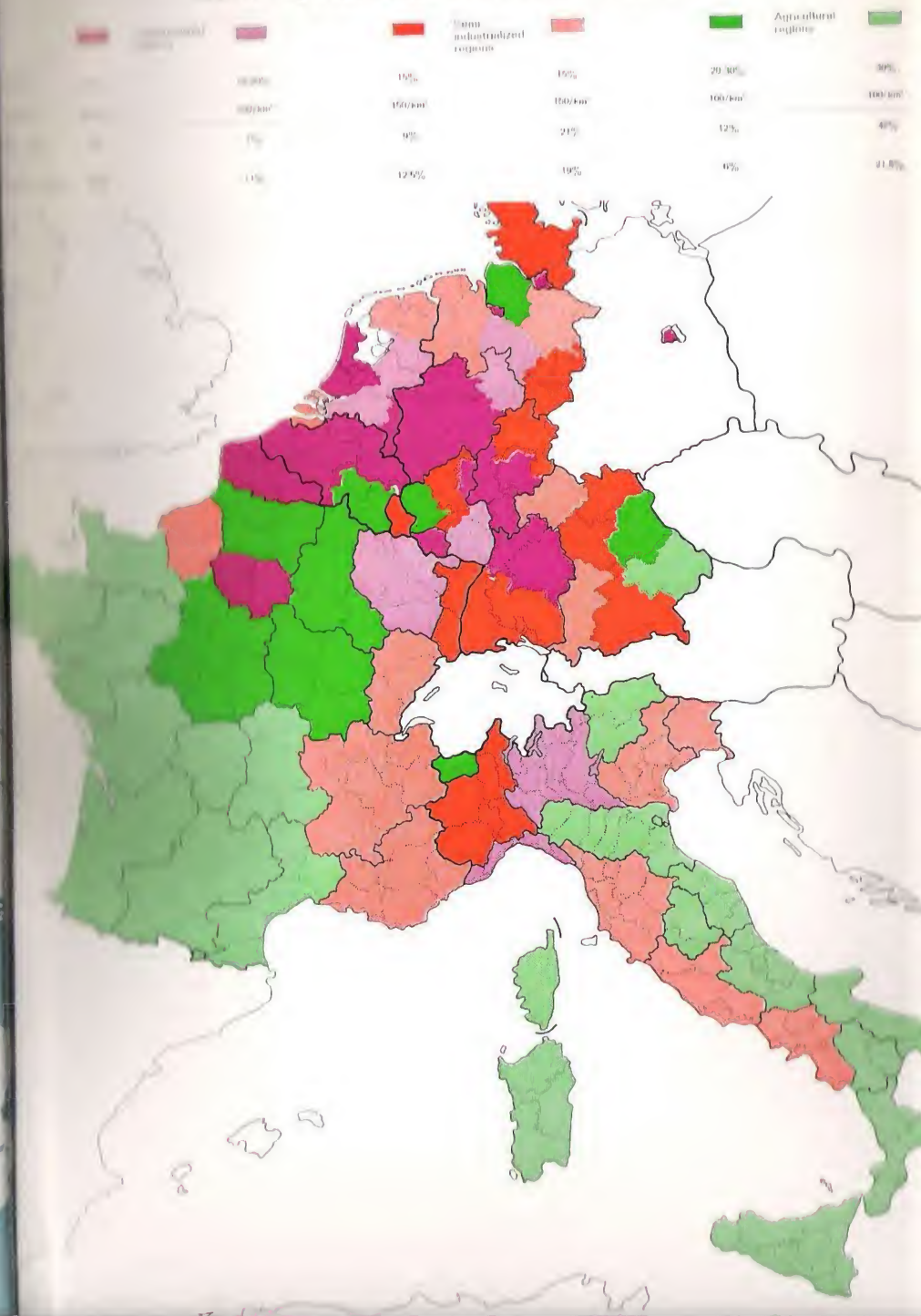
Goods traffic in the main European ports (1969).

16

□ In millions of tons



Map showing division of EEC member states into regions.



Over forty years ago the Netherlands only had seven million inhabitants. Projections at the time forecast that 'perhaps' the number would have increased to twelve and a half million by the end of the century. That figure was considered 'oppressively high'.

This 'oppressively high' figure has already been exceeded. Forecasters now anticipate that by the end of the twentieth century there will be eighteen million to twenty million people in the Netherlands. Does that 'oppress' today's experts even more? No, says the Director-General of the Government Planning Service in his annual report for 1965.

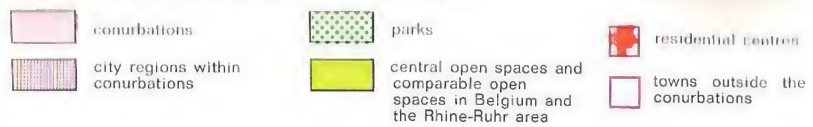
We will be able to cope. That is a bold assertion. But if you regard the Netherlands after the Second World War as a well-planned urban zone in industrial Western Europe you will have no trouble in accepting it. Forty years ago the European economy, both in private commerce and in the national context, was trapped in an independent way of thinking. Forty years ago the Netherlands still ruled over large and rich colonies. Despite a world war, Europe was still composed of nationally-thinking and nationally-acting nations. Home production was protected by trade regulations and high customs tariffs.

All this changed considerably after the Second World War. An economic expansion has taken place that cannot even have disappointed the real optimists of 1945. Thanks to this economy of scale, new opportunities have opened up for the Netherlands. Economic attitudes in both industry and government have gained wider and deeper perspectives. It seems that the Netherlands, despite the loss of her colonies and the increase in her population, can keep up with her neighbours' rate of economic growth.

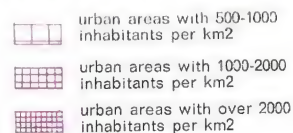
This economy of scale in economic (and political) thought has given a new dimension to existing ideas on physical planning. The land in the Netherlands with ten, twelve or

twenty million people cannot and may not be considered in isolation. The Netherlands is part of a highly-developed industrialized Western Europe in which internal and external traffic, trade and industry are growing more quickly than ever before. Thanks to her geographical situation the Netherlands can play an important part in this growth. But this also calls for the efficient use of the available land, because to waste land would mean missing economic opportunities within a rapidly developing Western Europe.

Structure of the Netherlands in the wider context.



Possible density of urban areas in about 2000.



Physical planning seeks to link present and future.

There was a time, and it was not so very long ago, when a solution to the problem of population growth in the Netherlands was being sought in the deliberate distribution of population. It was thought that the growth of the west of the country should be restricted and the development of the east and north encouraged.

However, the broader perspectives in practical economic thought and action which opened up at the end of the fifties proved that in practice this rather mathematical approach to physical planning could only be realized gradually.

Therefore, although the principle of wider distribution is being maintained, more emphasis is being laid on catering for the growing population in the west of the country.

Developments in society cannot be controlled, or if so only with difficulty. The most that can be done is to adjust imbalances. The Netherlands now lies in the natural development zone of an industrialized Western Europe. This must of necessity include Great Britain.

It used to be quite an undertaking to reach Great Britain. Now, mere ferries link Britain with the Continent. Their number and frequency is continually increasing, both by sea and air. Soon there will be a tunnel under the Channel which will attract a great deal of traffic. The west and south of the Netherlands will be on the edge of the tunnel's traffic catchment area. It will be both necessary and useful to take advantage of this in the appropriate way. This means making optimum use of a natural development, which is a very different thing from deliberately slowing one down.

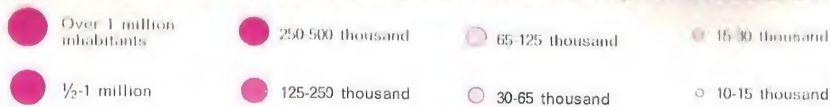
The areas to the south of the peripheral line between Alkmaar and Arnhem are by far the most affected by the development of Western Europe. Most Dutchmen will live there. But, says the second Government Report on Physical Planning, we must endeavour to see that in time at least six million of the twenty million Dutchmen live in the north of the country.

The difference in approach between the two halves is quite clear: in the west, south and south-west we must use natural developments to the greatest possible advantage and in the east and the north we must pursue an active settlement policy.

Maastricht, focal point of European transport routes.



Possible distribution of the larger concentrations of population throughout the Netherlands in about 20



In addition there are 2,400 centres not shown on the map.



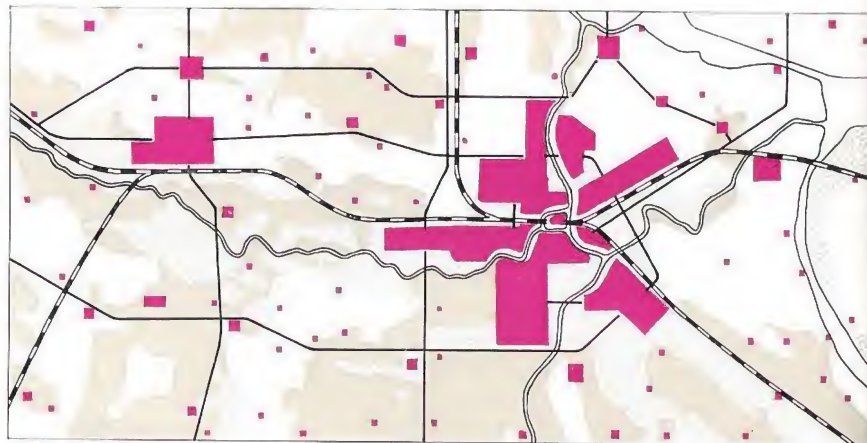
Urbanization is no longer 'the birth of a city', but the spreading over a region of what used to be adjacent urban elements.

At present about nine million Dutchmen live south of a line from Alkmaar to Arnhem, and three million north of it. The government wants to bring about a change in the proportion by pursuing a policy designed to foster settlement in certain areas. The main motive for the change is not to relieve the pressure on land in the west, but to promote the desired development of the north and east. In the north a varied urban and industrial climate will be created, giving rise to a wider choice of jobs and a broader social and cultural pattern. Agriculture in this area must change at a more rapid pace if an active settlement policy for the north and east is to be successful. The importance of agriculture is already on the decline, not as an economic factor in the national product, but as a source of employment. Twenty years ago, over 14 % of the entire Dutch working population was employed in agriculture. By 1980, thus in ten years' time, the figure will probably have fallen to 5 %. In the meantime, the services sector may claim from over 45 % to nearly 55 % of the working population. Over the years, industry will probably maintain a constant percentage of over 40.

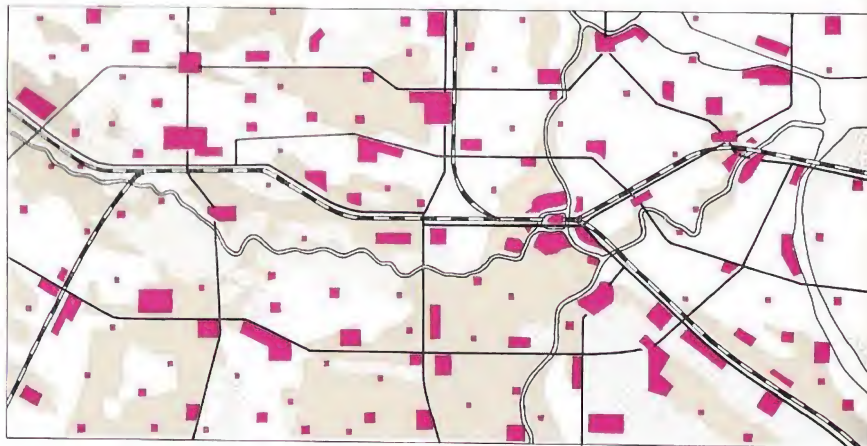
These percentage changes in employment, occasioned partly by the anticipated growth in the population, mean even more intensive urbanization in the Netherlands. For it is a fact that trade, transport and industry operate most profitably in and from sizable centres of population.

The Netherlands will undergo urbanization, that is beyond all doubt. According to the latest forecasts, the population density in the area south of a line from Alkmaar to Arnhem will have risen to about 900 per square kilometre by the year 2000. To the north a density of 300 per square kilometre is anticipated.* At present about seven million people live in urban areas in the Netherlands. By the turn of the century that figure will certainly have increased to fourteen million.

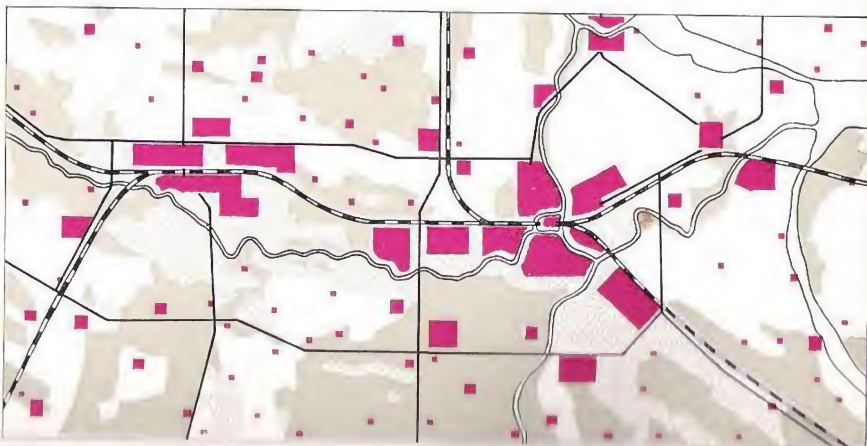
* In 1970 the average population density for the country as a whole was 380 inhabitants per square kilometre.



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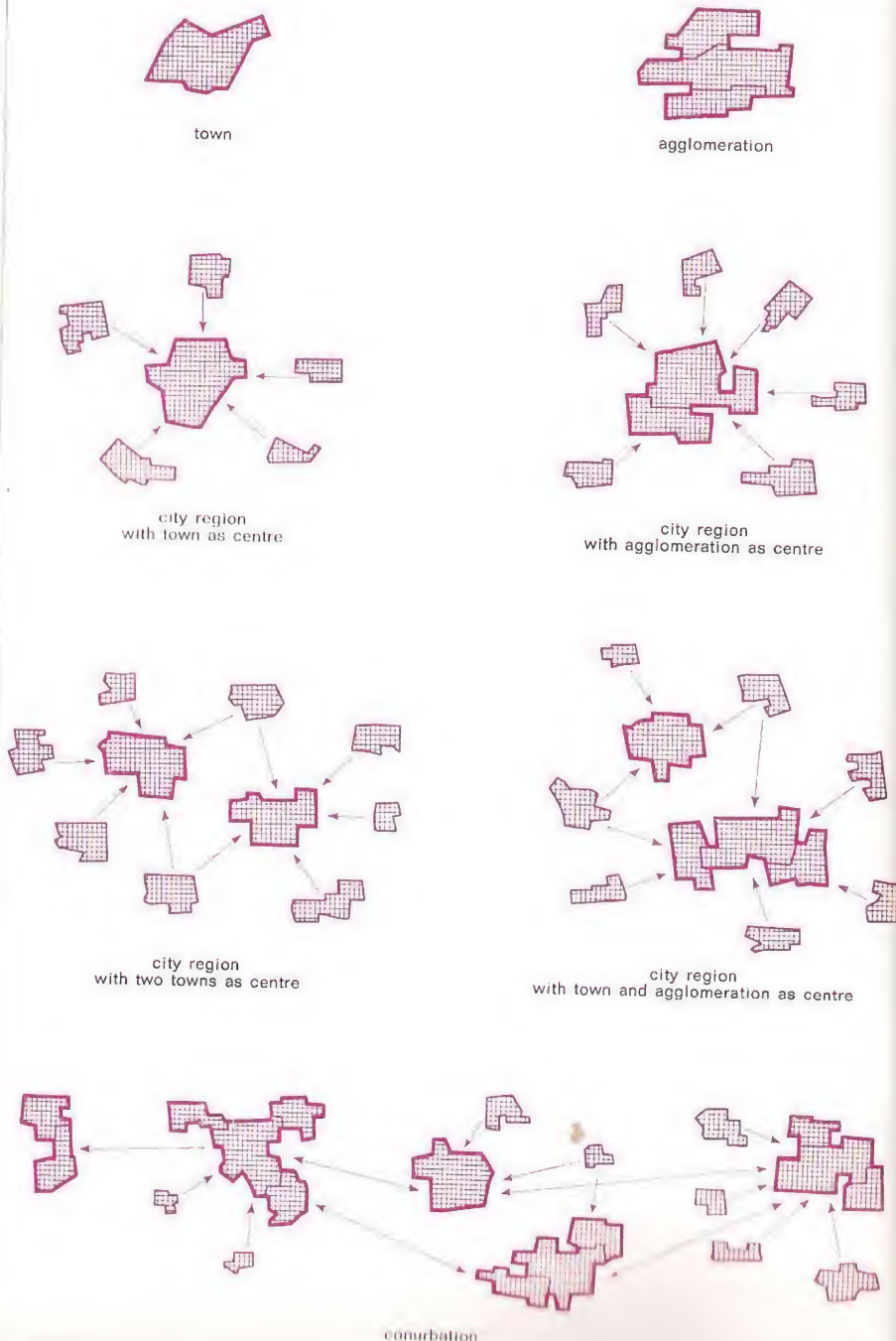


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More than two-thirds of the Dutch people will then live in urban concentrations.

What will the urban concentrations look like? Where will they be? How will they be linked together? Will there be enough land left around and between the towns to give the Dutch a livable environment?

Land must be more profitably used, if these questions are to be answered satisfactorily. But there is an answer — concentrated decentralization!



Land is one of the most irreplaceable commodities. It must not therefore be squandered.

The concentration of the population of the Netherlands, the answer to which is considered, in the second Government Report on Physical Planning, to lie in the principle of 'concentrated decentralization' can be expressed another way, in figures. Prof. W. Steigenga has done this, calculating that in 1960 each household in the Netherlands, i.e. complete and incomplete families with their own dwelling, had a living space of 1.13 hectares. With a population of twenty million, each household will have only half that amount. In these calculations Prof. Steigenga has taken into account the fact that independent households are continually getting smaller. This very decrease in the size of families makes greater demands on the land available; it is, however, expected that the use of land per inhabitant will increase. The Government Report on Physical Planning says that at the end of this century the residential area will almost have trebled and even if urban population 'merely' doubles.

The urban population needs more space for, inter alia, the growing number of cars. Not only must they be able to travel on wider roads, they must be able to park outside the home, the office, the factory or the shops. Educationists are no longer satisfied with having schools situated just anywhere, surrounded by other buildings. These are just two examples. The town needs space, greenery. The town must breathe, otherwise it will choke.

Clearly, unrestrained and unplanned use of space can seriously endanger the habitability of the Netherlands. The danger lies not so much in excessive concentration, but — as Prof. Steigenga says — in excessive dispersal of the urban population. By this we mean uncontrolled growth of commuter villages and widespread building more or less next-door to urban concentrations. Such an excessive sprawl of what is in fact a town-oriented population costs space, a great deal of space, and at the same time does not satisfy needs; for the necessary urban amenities are not profitable in such a sprawling development and so cannot be provided. It is another form of the ribbon development so roundly condemned in recent times.

Amstelveen, a suburb of Amsterdam with 70,000 inhabitants.



Ribbon development arose from the town-oriented Dutchmen's need for open spaces. This need is quite understandable, and it still exists. An attempt is now being made to cater for it by creating around the new and existing urban centres a varied range of growth opportunities in which there is as much room for the much-sought-after house as for the more concentrated forms of dwelling, with green spaces and parks between and around them. Thus arise what are called 'city regions', which, protected by green belts of some size, finally form a conurbation. The conurbations must in turn be separated and remain separated by buffer zones of agricultural landscape. The most striking example of this at the moment is the central, open heart of the Randstad Holland. (West Holland Conurbation). This is what is meant by 'concentrated decentralization'.



Plan of main-road network 1970.

- existing single-carriageway roads to be improved or widened when necessary
- existing dual-carriageway roads to be improved or widened when necessary
- planned roads



Traffic is the dynamic index of modern life.

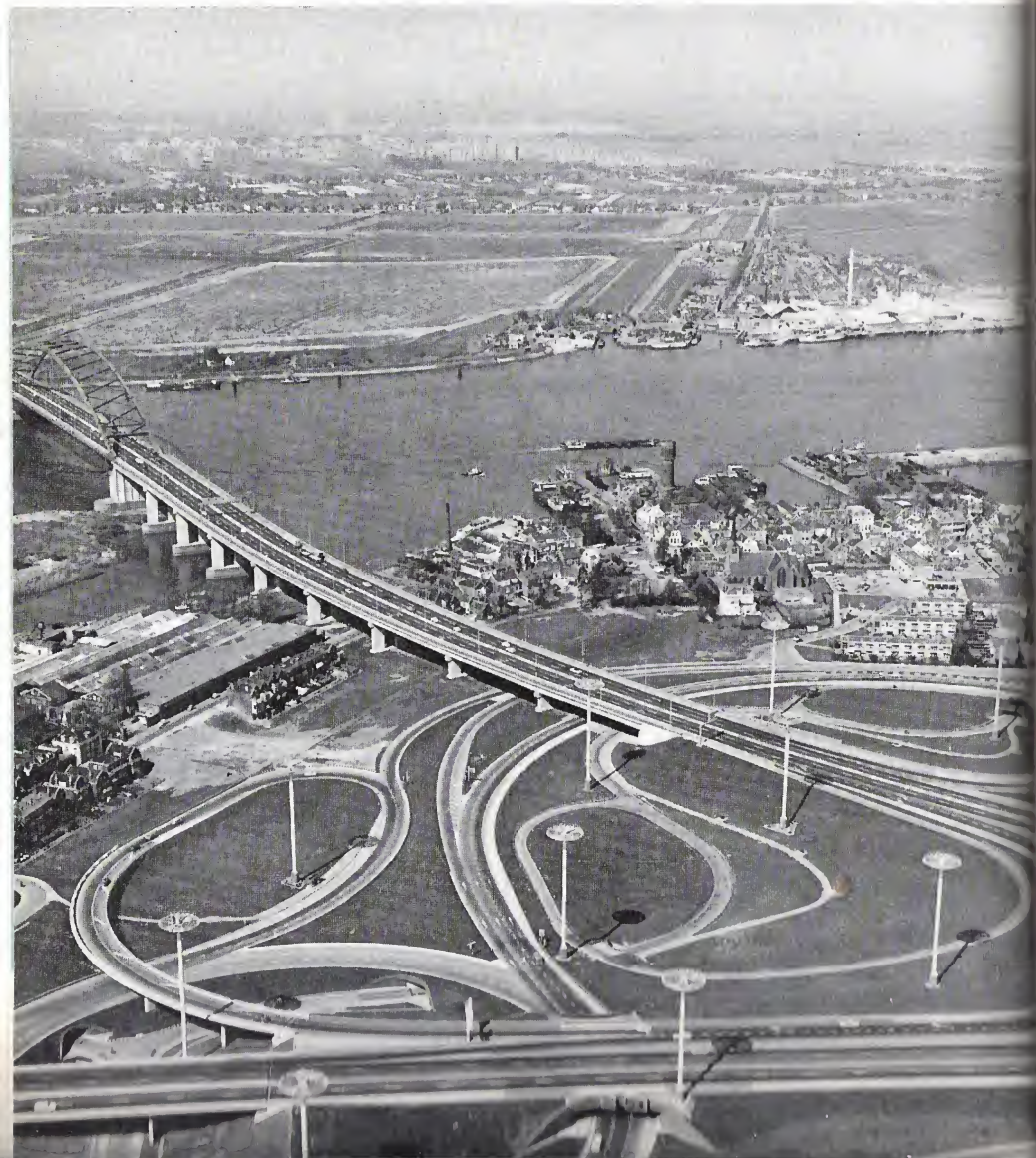
The progressive urbanization of the Netherlands on the lines of concentrated decentralization meets the need for a profitable use of land without prejudicing the various demands of modern man in his residential and working environment. Indeed, the growth of city regions in the Netherlands, with much emphasis on the house, and of conurbations with agricultural buffer zones creates favourable conditions for the development of good transport links between home and work. Indeed, the development of public transport is the only way to keep town centres alive. After all, what is the use of a town centre that cannot be reached? It is doomed.

This does not mean that the private car is condemned. The process of motorization cannot be curbed or reversed. There are now about two million private cars in the Netherlands. By 1980 there will be over four million. That must sound worrying to those for whom traffic jams already constitute a severe inconvenience.

Experience shows, however, that as the number of cars increases the intensity of use goes down. In other words, the number of kilometres covered by each car diminishes. Of course, it would be different if the roads and parking space increased at the same rate as the rise in the number of private cars, but that, unfortunately, has proved impossible — even in countries where much more land is available than here. It cannot be said with any certainty what function the private car will eventually play in social life. It will partly depend on what means society has available for 'giving room to the car'. It is much easier to predict what function the private car will perform to a decreasing extent, namely its function as commuter transport.

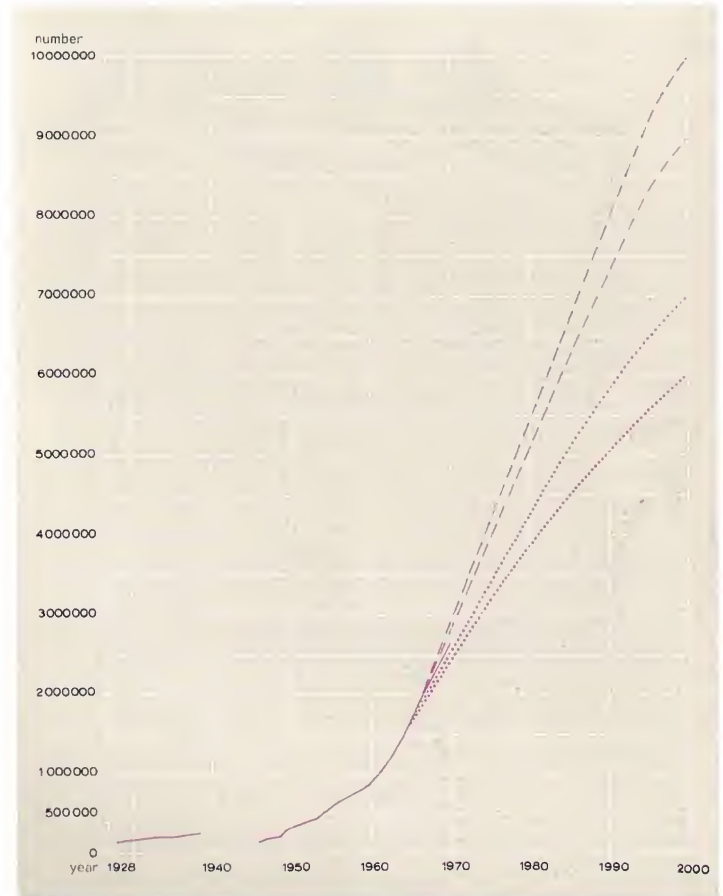
Commuter traffic is rush-hour traffic. This is one of the main responsibilities that public transport should assume. A shift from private towards public transport is inevitable, if land is to be profitably used. Only with public transport — but well-organized public transport — can these massive

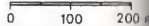
Rotterdam: The Van Brienenoord Bridge
Traffic facilities use up precious space, yet cannot be dispensed with.



Growth and forecasts of the number of private cars 1928-2000.

— minimum and maximum estimates according to the
Second Government Report on Physical Planning.
— later estimate





- | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|------------------------------|---|-------------------------------|
|  | Railway |  | public buildings |  | centre-access routes |
|  | mainly residential |  | streets, squares green areas |  | pedestrian area |
|  | mainly shops and catering establishments |  | water |  | warehouses and supply centres |
|  | mainly offices plus business and trade premises education plus special developments |  | main roads |  | parking areas |

An improved system of public transport would permit the largest traffic capacity to be reached with a relatively low use of space. The pattern, structure and operation of town, regional and national public transport should be organized with this in view, if the basic interests of the community as a whole are not to be prejudiced. The basic interests of the community lie in the planning principle of concentrated decentralization.

What exactly should now be done with public transport? There are a number of rough ideas on the subject. In urban concentrations of more than half a million people, local rail transport will be necessary on a traffic-free track with good connections with a railway station. A free track for trams or buses is also an urgent requirement in towns of 250,000 to 500,000 people. Nor can a fairly frequent bus service be dispensed with in smaller communities. Obviously, in all these cases, connections will have to be ensured between the various services and one or more connections laid on with the Netherlands Railways.

A question that has to be answered is whether a public transport service should be expected from the start to cover its costs. Authorities are more inclined to weigh the importance of profitable land use against a possible operating loss, certainly if that loss is due to costly initial investments. Some remarkable situations prevail in this respect in the Netherlands. It is a historical fact that the many transport undertakings using the canals and rivers contribute little or nothing to the provision of canals and other facilities, which are paid for by the authorities.* Until recently it was also an indisputable fact that the Netherlands Railways itself usually has to bear the costs of building bridges over canals, viaducts over roads and the costs of safety arrangements at crossings. Furthermore, there have always been financial

* In 1968, inland water transport concerns carried about 250 million tons of goods over a network, within the Netherlands, of about 5,000 km. In the same year the Netherlands Railways, with a network of 3,200 km, carried 25 million tons of goods; 270 million tons were carried by road transport (46,000 km of metalled roads)

Rotterdam. Above-ground section of the 'Metro' underground railway.



disputes in the whole area of transport between the State and other public bodies, which has prevented the formulation of an effective and integrated transport and traffic policy. Fortunately, the tide is turning. The second half of the sixties saw the introduction of the system of State grants to municipalities for specific projects in the road-building and public transport fields. The State contributes to the drawing up of local and regional transport and traffic plans, and subsidies can also be paid to the Netherlands Railways and other bodies for routes which are not — or not as yet — profitable. Finally, the urbanization of the Netherlands means that the cost of transport links and traffic facilities cannot and must not be tied to the chance course of administrative boundaries or forms of operation as they exist at present. The second Government Report on Physical Planning states that an attempt must be made to distribute the costs of the main-road system and of the infrastructure of public transport, with the whole city region financing these amenities. A broader financial basis is thus needed. This puts the municipalities in a completely different position, vis-à-vis each other, when tackling the problem of profitable land use.

Forms of regional administration.



Cooperation on the basis of the Joint Organization Act.



Rijnmond (established by the Rijnmond Authority Act)



Areas in which administrative cooperation on a regional scale is now in preparation



One or more municipalities concerned in two cooperation-oriented bodies



Physical planning is so important that it will to a large extent have to determine the administrative structure.

There are about 860 municipalities in the Netherlands, almost half of which have less than 5000 inhabitants. A number of them are in areas in which the planning concept of city regions and conurbations is being discussed. Most of them are in areas to be kept 'open'.

The problem of space is of a different nature for the two kinds of small municipality. In the one case they must frequently endeavour to adapt as well as they can to the continual process of urbanization, and in the other they must resist this very urbanization as a social duty in the interests of agriculture and recreation. Whatever the position, however, positive administrative measures must be taken in both cases.

A small municipality (small in terms of the number of inhabitants) cannot be urbanized without administrative vision and ample funds. Otherwise solutions which are too constrictive are likely to be chosen. On the other hand, 'keeping open' small municipalities outside the direct sphere of influence of urban concentrations poses quite different problems. The dilemma here is to find the middle way between improving amenities for the inhabitants — since otherwise such a municipality will risk becoming a backward area — and resisting the onward progress of urbanization. The joining together of a number of small municipalities which must remain 'open' or 'agricultural' would greatly strengthen the administrative power of any such new, enlarged municipality. An amalgamation of this kind affords more freedom of action in financial matters and thereby improves the level of amenities of the resident population. It is evident from the second Government Report on Physical Planning that the Government wishes to follow this trend.

In principle, it should be possible for small municipalities within the sphere of influence of a city region to cooperate at inter-municipal level with one or more 'big sisters' in that region. However, precisely the voluntary nature of such inter-municipal cooperation entails the drawback that it may sometimes be withheld by a given municipality in respect of a

joint arrangement, and this damages the region as a whole and thereby also detracts from a profitable land use.

A supramunicipal body can remove this objection. While the individual municipal administration continues in existence, the supramunicipal body can influence planning development for the whole region. It can obtain specific statutory powers for the region and, in addition, can promote the coordination of matters which go beyond municipal boundaries and for which it has no authority itself.

Experience with this kind of inter-municipal and supramunicipal organization is still limited, but it is beyond all doubt that the modern trend towards larger units will not leave the municipal structure unaffected, precisely because the municipalities play such an important part in the use and allocation of land.*

* In September 1969 the Minister for Home Affairs promised in the Second Chamber that he would seek to have the formation of regional units statutorily regulated and a structural outline of the division of administrative responsibility drawn up.

The new Physical Planning Act 1965 imposed a heavy and responsible task on the municipalities, obliging them to draw up development plans themselves for their entire area. All these plans are legally binding on the citizen and society. All the development plans of all municipalities taken together determine in fact the national pattern of space utilization.

The Act obliges the municipalities to draw up development plans in any case for undeveloped areas, but it is not so inflexible that exemption cannot be requested; there are exceptions to every rule. No allocation plan has to be drawn up for developed areas — unless requested by higher authority — in this case the provincial executive.*

A municipality's development plan must indicate where and how the municipality intends to carry out residential development, where and what kind of industrial premises may be established, which areas are available for agriculture, and which areas are available for recreation. The regulations make no distinction between active and passive recreation, i.e., to give two extreme examples, between a well-laid out park and a sports field.

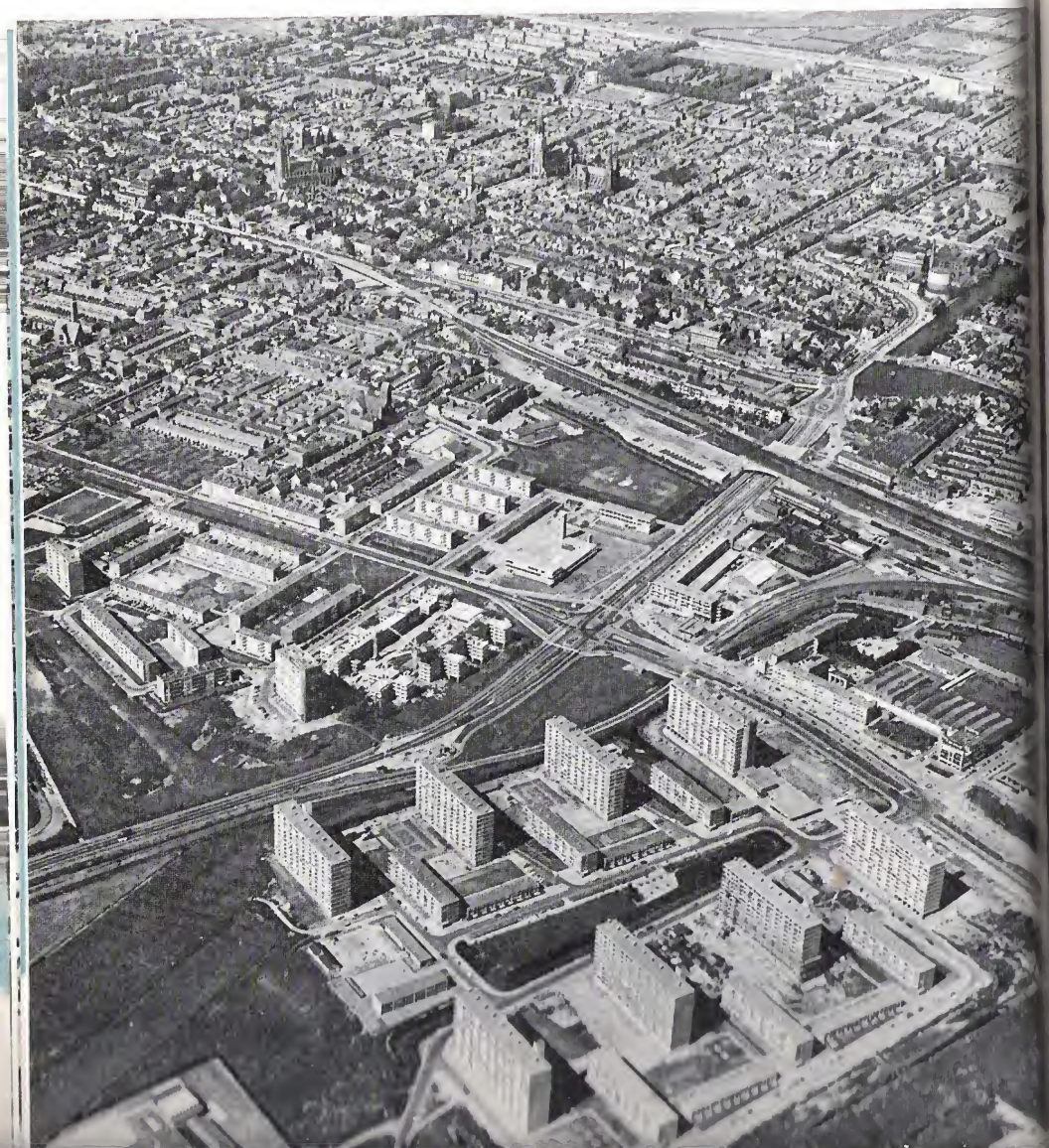
The plan must also of course show traffic facilities in the widest sense, and specific areas of the municipality may be reserved for landscape and nature protection. A plan of this kind, which must be approved by the provincial executive, must be revised at least once every ten years, but the provincial administration may request interim reviews, if for example new developments occur in a wider context. The provincial administration may also issue 'directives' in respect of parts of the development plan.

The directives are binding.

The drawing up of a municipal development plan is of course attended by the necessary legal safeguards. The citizen may

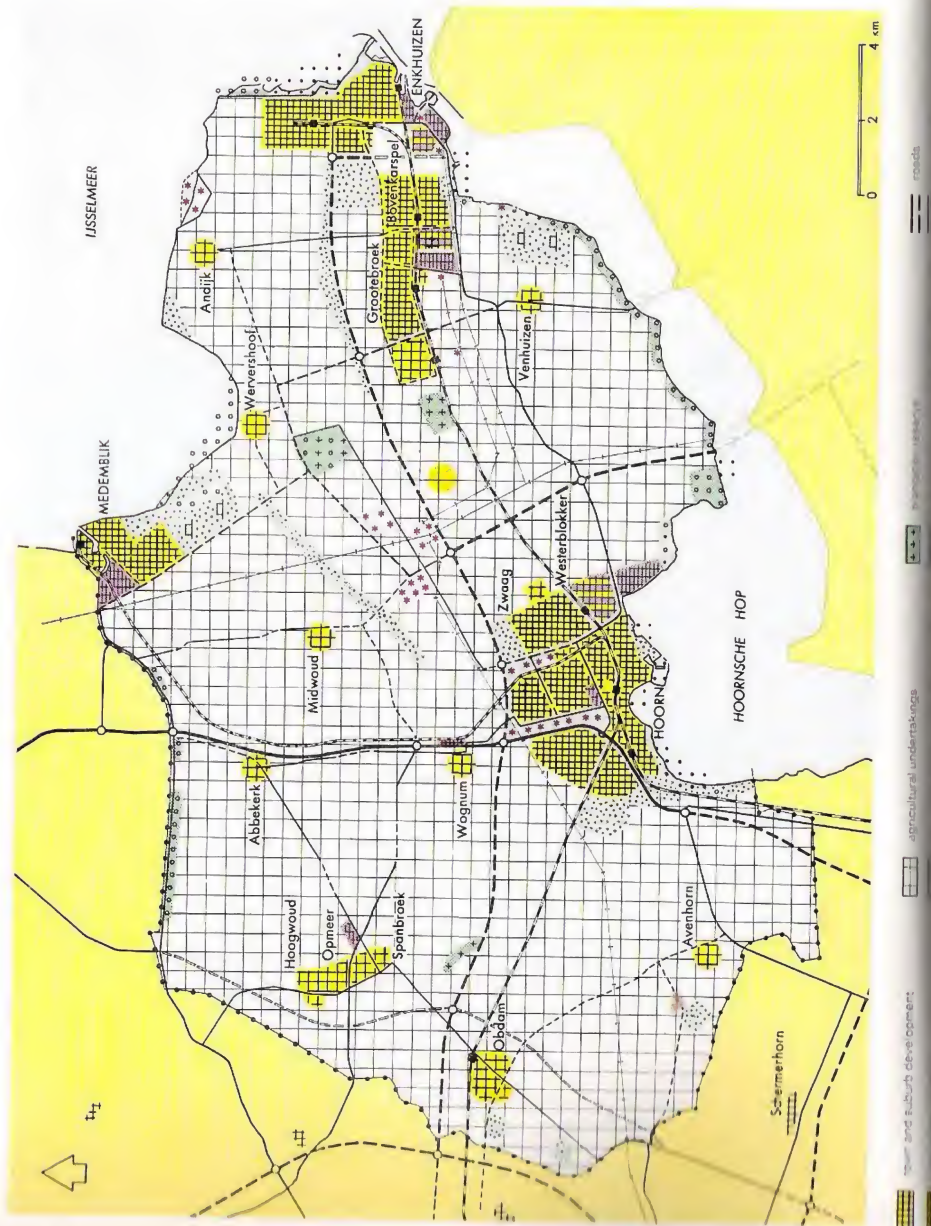
* In principle there are three tiers of administration in the Netherlands: the municipalities, the provinces and the State. There are 11 provinces which administer their provincial area, but also supervise the administration of the municipalities in the province. City regions, as discussed in the foregoing, will be able to take over partly the duties of the municipalities, and partly those of the province. Whether a fourth administrative tier is thus to be introduced has not yet been determined.

Delft - Voorhof.



appeal to the municipal council, and later to the provincial executive. In the final instance, he may appeal to the Crown. The municipal executive may also formally appeal to the Crown against decisions of the provincial executive relating to the development plan. It should not be expected that all the municipalities in the Netherlands will produce, overnight, development plans as defined by the new Act. Their formulation demands a great deal of preparation and time and, above all, much expertise. The time-limits set are generous and, moreover, as already mentioned, exemption may be granted for a specific period. In the meantime the existing development (or 'expansion') plans, drawn up under previous legislation by practically all the municipalities, have provisionally been invested with the functions of the new-style development plans. Because new developments may necessitate rapid, systematic action in certain municipalities or groups of municipalities, the provincial authorities have been authorized to lay down time-limits within which new municipal development plans must be produced.

A municipality thus required to draw up a plan within a given time must be put in the picture by both the province concerned and the State as regards the physical planning policy envisaged for the region of which the municipality is a part.

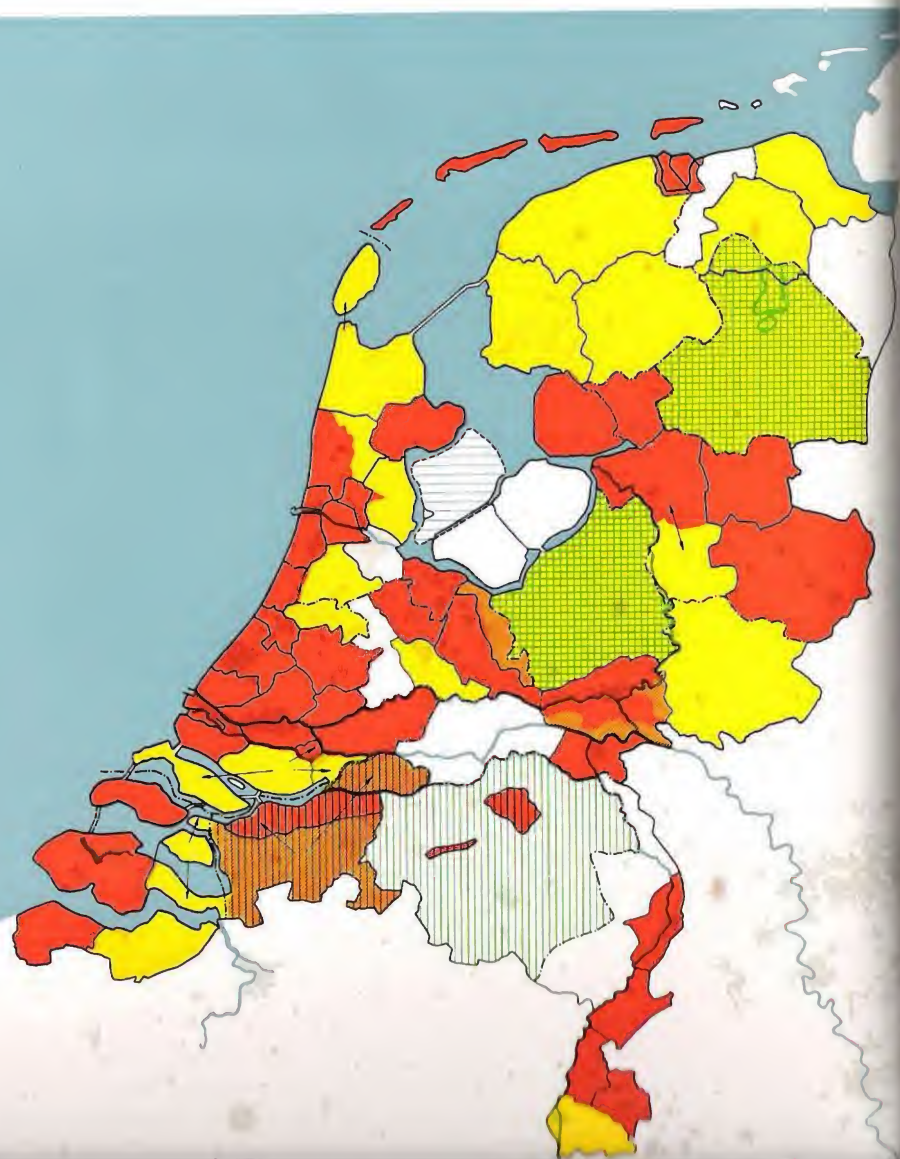


A great deal of physical planning policy is executed at provincial and municipal level.

It was formerly within the competence of the provinces to draw up legally binding plans for a whole region. On such plans the municipalities in the region were then obliged to base their own development plans. This principle was abandoned in the new 1965 legislation. The procedure to be followed in the drawing up of a binding regional plan was too cumbersome. Furthermore, the whole system was too rigid to accommodate the dynamic developments of modern times. Physical planning is a never-ending process. Unexpected circumstances are continually arising which could not be reckoned with in regional plans already fixed and approved. For this reason, under the new system, the provincial regional plans are only guideline programmes reflecting certain ideas current at the time. These can change, either because of needs arising at a lower administrative level — in the municipalities or drainage boards — or because of desiderata emerging in the provincial or national context. The importance of the new-style provincial regional plan, although not binding, must not be underestimated as a guideline for as profitable a use of land as possible. It is an elastic conception in which local ideas and national desires and potentialities are accommodated. From such plans the municipalities can see the general line of policy envisaged by the higher authorities. They are at liberty to deviate from this line when drawing up their own development plans, but if they do so they run the risk that the statutorily required approval may not be given to the plan by the provincial authorities.

The reverse is also possible. The municipality's reasons for departing from the regional plan may be so convincing that the province adapts the latter plan accordingly. This room for manoeuvre is one of the major gains in the new legislation. In addition, the municipalities are able, on the basis of the provincial regional plans, to draw up a 'structure plan' for themselves. The function of a municipal structure plan is, like that of the regional plan, to serve as a guide. It is not binding, but should be seen as a starting-point for the new-style development plan which eventually has to be produced. In addition, a number of municipalities may draw up structure

Stage of preparation of regional plans as at 31 December 1969.



plans together, taking, if necessary, the regional plan as a basis.

The provincial executive is required by law to produce a finalized regional plan once every ten years — the same procedure therefore as for a municipal development plan. But there are still more statutory requirements, and these make the provincial regional plan even more important. For the Minister can issue directives to provinces to review certain elements of regional plans at an earlier date. With its regional plan duly modified the province can in turn issue directives to the municipalities which require them to modify their development plans too.

Here we see the direct influence exercised by the national authorities on the drawing up of the municipal development plans.

Organization of physical planning in the Netherlands.

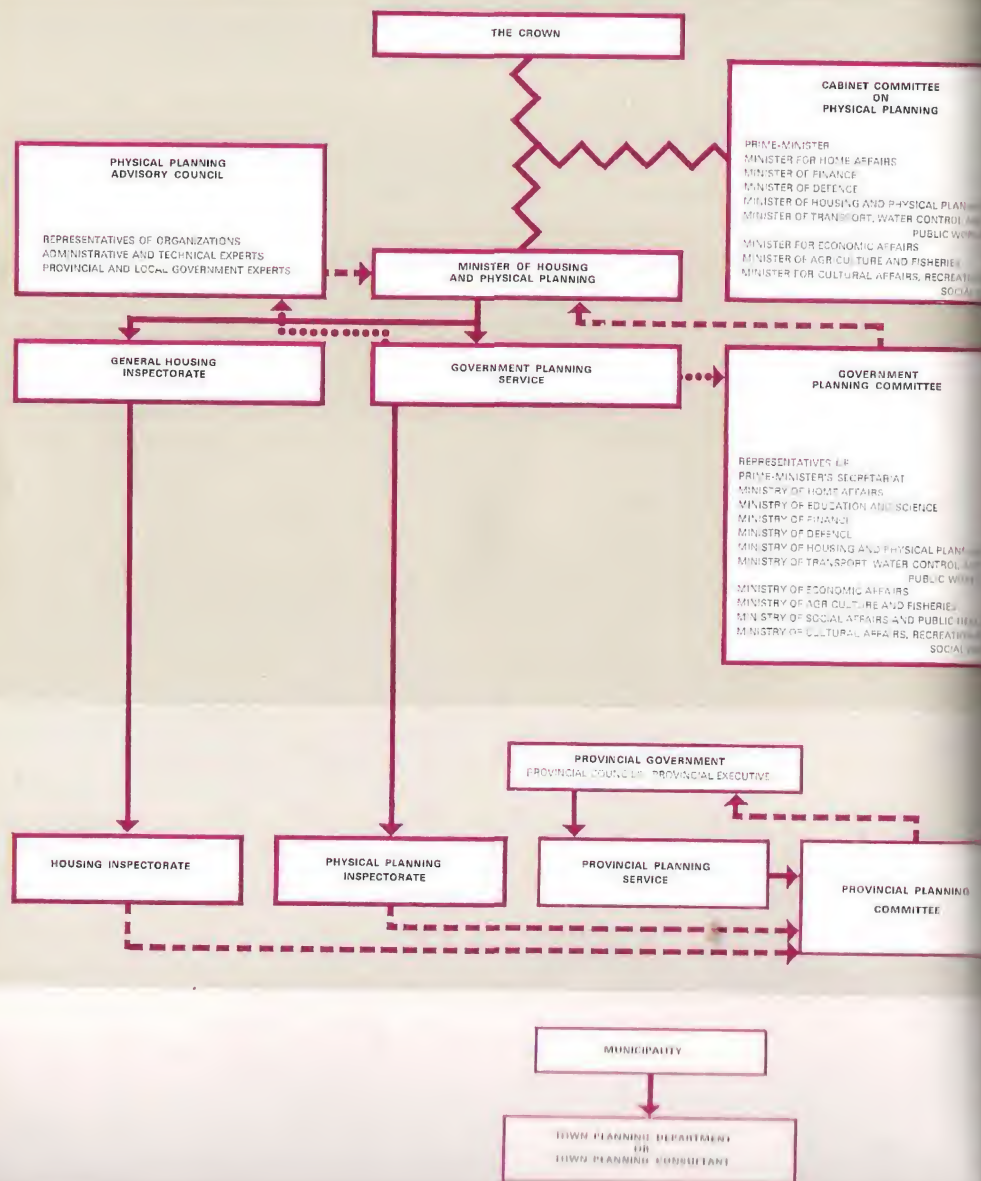
Physical planning is a conscious coordination by the authorities of land use and activities directly connected therewith.

What now is the task of the national authorities? There was a time in the history of planning theory when it was thought that the answer lay in the production of a National Plan — an all-embracing design in which all questions of land-use would be settled for the future — just as detailed as a municipal development plan but for the whole of the Netherlands. It was intended that the National Plan should establish the lines on which provinces and municipalities drew up their own plans. Such a national plan proved too fantastic to be true and consequently disappeared from the Act of 1965 as an instrument of national land-use policy.

Not even from the land-use point of view is the Netherlands a self-sufficient country, and a National Plan for all facets of land-use would always lag behind the rapid developments which characterise Western Europe and the world in these modern times. Such delay could mean lagging behind world developments.

That is why, in the new Physical Planning Act the National Plan had to give way to a national policy, which is definitely not the same thing. The national policy operates with more flexible methods than a technical blueprint, which the National Plan was presumed to be. The present national policy is directly open to the influence of developments from below — the region or the province — and those from outside, from foreign countries.

At national level there is a Government Planning Committee in which eleven Ministries are represented and on which experts from outside the Civil Service sit. The Committee cooperates and has its secretariat with the Government Planning Department of the Ministry of Housing and Physical Planning. The Department has five inspectors, each of whom is responsible for a part of the country. They are required to maintain contacts with the provinces and municipalities in their area. They form the direct link between the local authorities and the State. The State lays down the general lines of the development



desired. This is done in policy reports to parliament, as in the last report on physical planning. That report contained, among other things, the second structural outline for the development of open-air recreation. In this outline the government expounded its ideas on the expansion of recreation areas. More policy reports will doubtless follow. Indeed, various other reports made by the government to Parliament are connected with or touch on the aspects of physical planning (sea harbour report, public health report, drinking-water report, growth and structure of the economy, etc.)

It is not surprising, then, that more than half the Ministers in the Cabinet belong to the Physical Planning Council. This is the largest of the Cabinet's ministerial, working committees for any specific area of Cabinet policy:

In principle, the government has three ways in which to implement planning policy;

- a. subsidising work and other activities undertaken by local authorities and individuals
- b. implementing work and plans in which the State itself is directly involved
- c. statutory means

The said statutory means enable the government to issue imperative directions to provinces and municipalities in respect of their physical plans. Furthermore, the Crown is empowered to withhold approval for municipal development plans. Finally, the Crown is empowered to draw up national development plans on specific aspects of planning.

The flexible approach to planning policy adopted by the national authorities is also clearly evidenced in the means named under a. and b. By subsidising or declining to subsidise specific schemes and by implementing or not implementing State projects, the national authorities can deliberately give direction to a national planning policy, and thereby give substance to the concept of profitable land use.

Of course, everyone concerned must be clear about what the State intends, about how 'The Hague' conceives of the future, about how the Netherlands may one day appear. It is precisely for this reason that the government's policy reports on physical planning are so important.

Look ahead . . .

From right to left:
Dr. P. C. W. M. Bogaers, Minister of Housing and Physical Planning from 1963 to 1966
Dr. Z. Y. van der Meer, Chairman of the Government Planning Committee
Mr. J. Vink, Director-General of Physical Planning until 1967



Between now and the year 2000 changes will regularly have to be made in the picture and the course adopted will have to be altered accordingly.

What the Netherlands will possibly look like at the turn of the century can be deduced from the second Report on Physical Planning laid before Parliament by the government in September 1966. Short and long-term policy outlines were traced on the basis of a number of assumptions and more or less certain expectations.

These policy outlines relate to urban growth, the development of road traffic and public transport, industrialization and the possible growth of new harbours, the role of agricultural areas and opportunities afforded for open-air recreation.

This is all roughly summarised in a large map called: the structural map of land use in the Netherlands around the year 2000.

However. . . the map is not a National Plan; it does not attempt to give exact population forecasts or to give an exact picture of local or regional development. For such would not be in keeping with new planning concepts. It merely gives an idea of possible developments, based on the data available in 1966. Significantly, the government calls it an 'indicative' map.

From it can be seen what the government regards as the most desirable structure for the Netherlands in the years immediately ahead. Government policy will therefore be based on it — but only for that same period. Pointers may change in the course of time, either through new ideas forthcoming from the authorities at lower levels, or by reason of national or international developments. Both possibilities are most emphatically allowed for in this approach to national planning policy. When he introduced the report to the public, the then Minister of Housing and Physical Planning, Dr P. C. W. M. Bogaers, said:

'Generally speaking, it cannot be said how much room there is for deviations. It will vary from case to case. It will depend to a considerable extent on the alternatives available.'

And later:

'I can, for instance, well imagine that maintaining the central open area — the open area between the Randstad (West Holland Conurbation) and the towns of Brabant — will be regarded by the State as much more important than the direction in which some town or other in a rural area may wish to expand.'

What is really important is the preservation and protection of the rich and very varied natural environment of the Netherlands. Clustering of towns and the encroachment of industry on living space must be avoided. This involves not only the 'open' areas or the preservation of dramatic landscapes, waste land or the establishment of new parks. It also involves the cleanness of the water in ditches, canals, lakes and rivers, and the purity of the air both in towns and outside them.

The 1966 structural map of land use endeavours to reflect these ideas in a pattern of colours, lines and dots. But, as Mr Bogaers said:

'... the structural map of land use will never be regarded, in itself, as an argument against a regional plan or a municipal development plan which diverges from it. It will always be the ideas underlying the map that are set against provincial and municipal policy.'

In short: the ideas behind the structural map, and not the map itself, will determine the government's physical planning policy.

All in all, the government wishes the development of the North Sea area to be regarded more as a whole than has hitherto been the case.

Population growth is one of the main data determining the land use structure map. Figures show that, for almost a hundred years now, population growth in the Netherlands has fluctuated between 1.3 and 1.4 % per year. On this basis it has been forecast that the population in the year 2000 will be about twenty million.

In 1965, however, the birth rate fell for the first time and, in the following year, the death rate went up. This resulted in a considerable drop in the excess of births over deaths. In the first half of 1964 the excess had been 13.4 % but in the first half of 1966 it sank to 11.6 %.

Taken on its own, this drop in the excess of births over deaths is not of overriding importance in a long-term planning context. Planning, after all, relates to measures that will take some decades to carry through. So it does not really make much difference whether the figure of twenty million is reached in 2000 or a few years later. The government report is, then, geared not so much to the year 2000 as to the anticipated population of twenty million.

Another major consideration underlying the structural map is the influence of international developments on national physical planning policy. This European influence can be seen from the numerous adjoining maps in which the Netherlands is shown as an element of Western Europe as a whole. The anticipated further industrial expansion of the West-German Ruhr, Belgium, Northern France — and Britain, too — will involve the Netherlands south of a line from Alkmaar to Arnhem. Geographically, the Netherlands lies at the heart of a future enlarged EEC.


What national physical planning policy must do is to direct these developments along the right lines. The report says and the structural map shows, that a West-European urban triangle is building up, the internal balance of which is becoming more and more clearly discernible.

Morphological urbanization in 1960.

municipality or group of adjoining municipalities with:

 1,000 people per sq.km of land and 50,000 people

 1,000 people per sq.km of land and 10,000 people

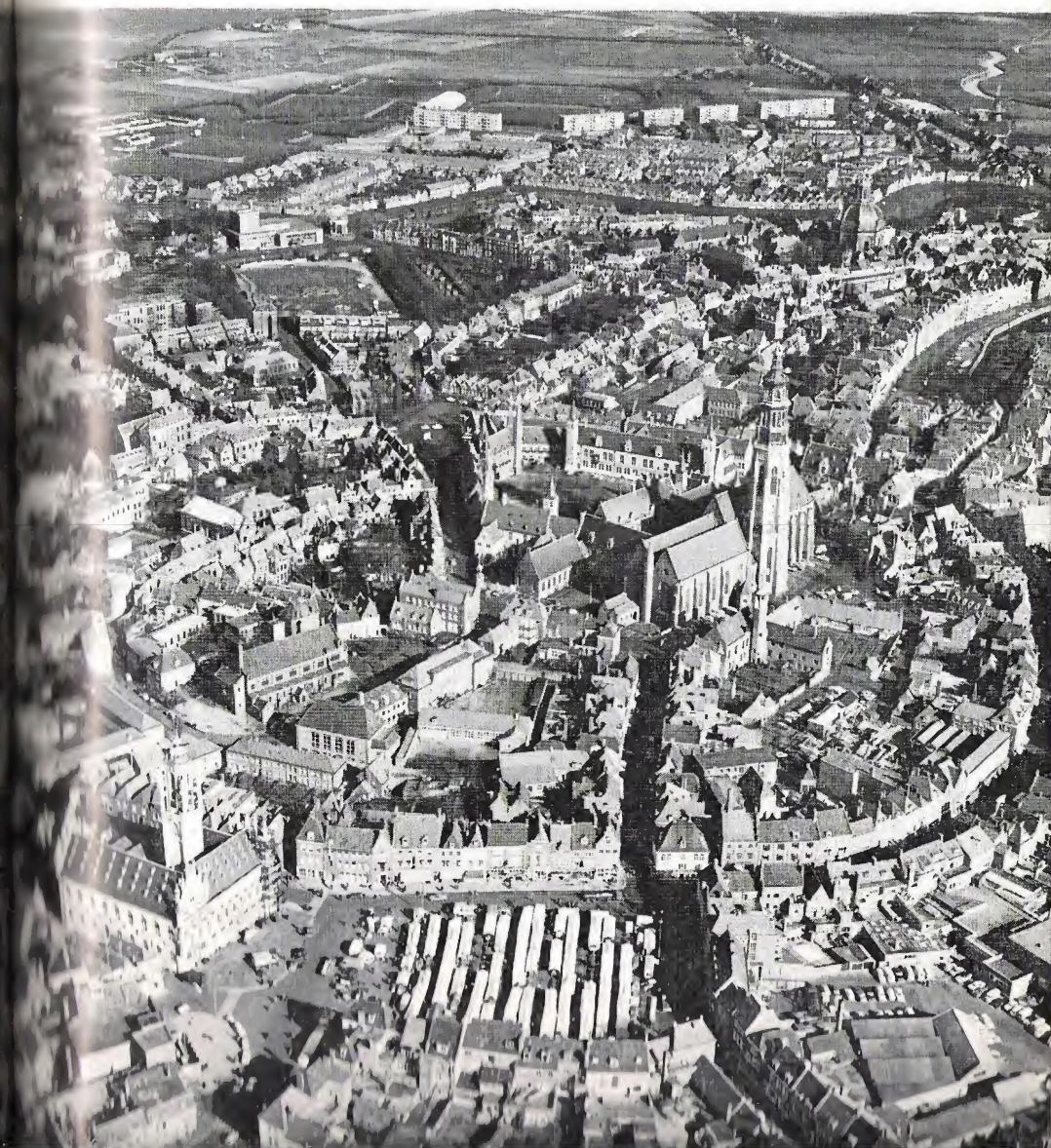
 400 people per sq.km of land and 10,000 or more people



Schiedam with a disintegrating centre in the industrialized area of the Rotterdam Waterway.



Middelburg with a flourishing, rebuilt centre, on the island of Walcheren in Zeeland.



Second structural map showing the proposed development of open-air recreation.

★ ☆ Large-scale elements for day-recreation (black stars show elements already contained in first structure map)

Areas primarily to be developed for day-recreation to provide for:

regional needs

supra-regional needs

areas which, by landscaping and various other arrangements and facilities, are to be made suitable also for recreation

water and waterside areas also to be made to serve recreation as far as possible by landscaping and other arrangements

Areas primarily to be developed for weekend and holiday recreation

with the emphasis on encouraging the provision of new facilities

with the emphasis on redevelopment and expansion of existing complexes

by full utilization of development potential (with the aid of landscaping)

areas which, by landscaping and various other arrangements and facilities, are to be made suitable also for weekend and holiday recreation

Areas not shaded may be incorporated in various other schemes

Stage of planning and execution of large-scale elements of day recreation as at 31 December 1969.

☆ structural planning not yet started

★ structural planning under way

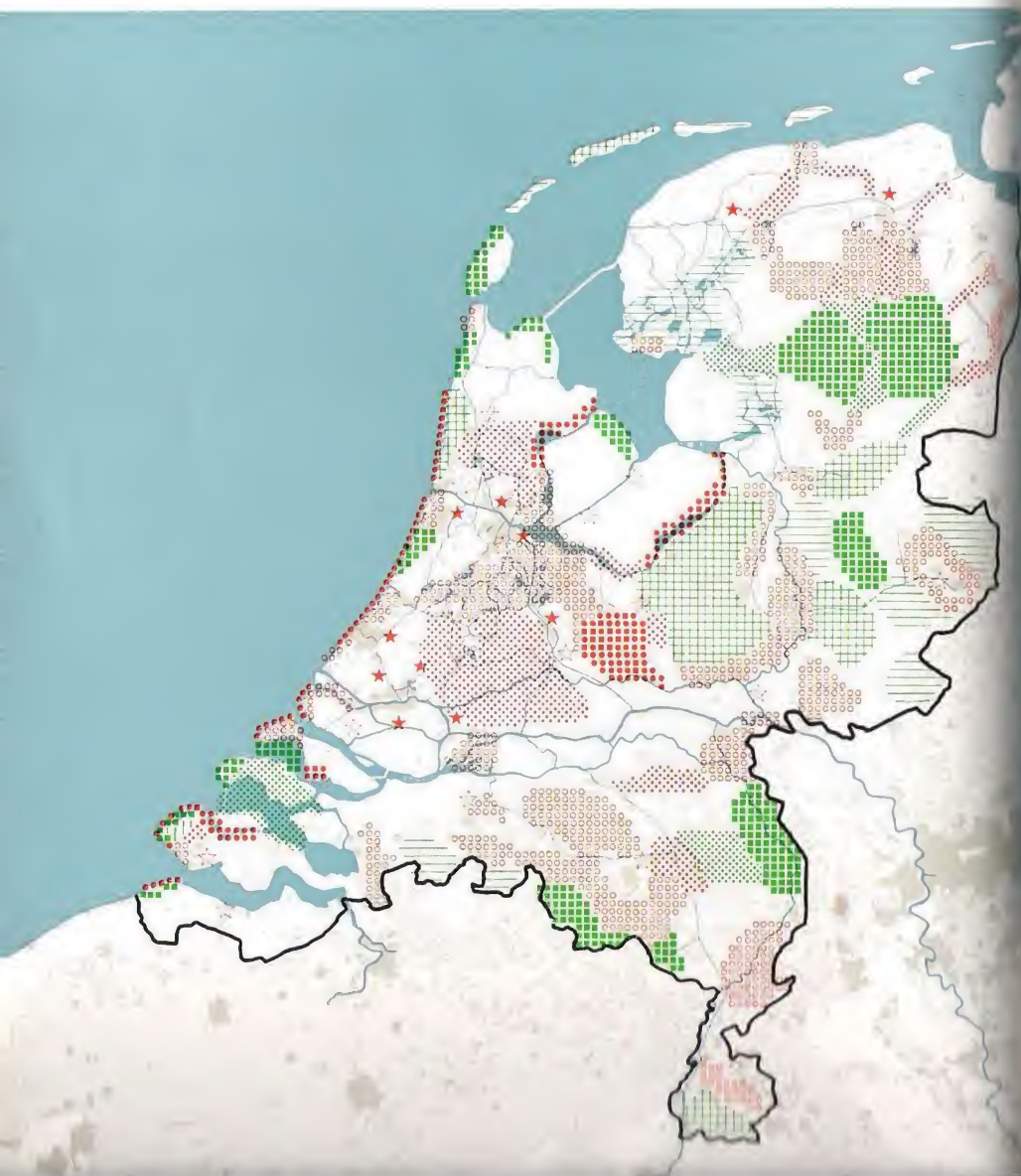
★ structural planning complete

★ construction under way

□ land purchase in preparation

■ land purchase in progress

■ land purchase complete



Delta area.

Industrial and harbour areas

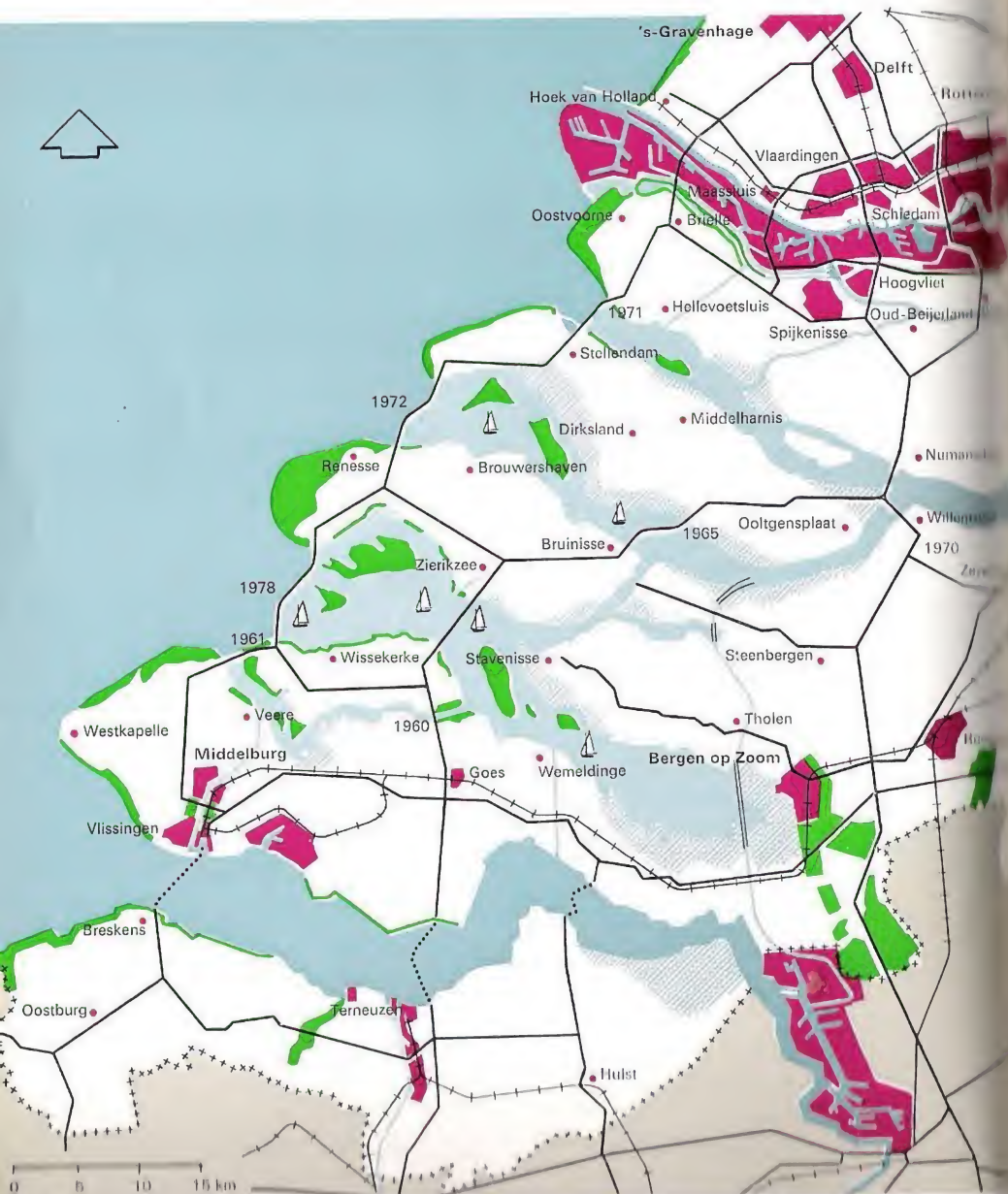
Fresh water

Main roads

Recreational and natural areas

Salt water

Railways



Prerequisites of a fruitful two-way cooperative relationship between State and society are openness of policy and the dissemination of lucid information.

Of the complexes in the urban triangle of Western Europe, the Randstad — the area between Amsterdam, The Hague and Rotterdam — is the most favourably situated, but at the same time the least able to expand. It is to be expected that within the next decade the Rotterdam and Amsterdam harbour and industrial complexes will have attained to their fullest development. For this reason the government sets great store by developing the Zeeland Scheldt basin — the Delta area to the south of Rotterdam — as the third industrial and harbour complex of international importance in the country. In April 1971 the report 'The development of the south-west of the Netherlands' was published by the Government Physical Planning Council. This report gives outlines of physical planning policy, as did the Second Report on Physical Planning which is still relevant. In the somewhat longer term Groningen (with Delfzijl-Eemshaven) will form a fourth complex on the North Sea coast.

Roads, rail connections, canals, bridges and tunnels can have a positive effect on the growth of a complex of this kind. Yet these costly projects, which have to be financed with public money, are usually carried out only when the need for them becomes actual. And it is not the authorities who determine this need, but the community as a whole. The authorities will have to keep their finger on the community's pulse, as it were, if they are to achieve an efficient use of land. At the same time the citizen will want to know what the authorities are prepared to do and how far they will go in providing community facilities.

It is in part for this reason that a broadly-based advisory body is provided for in the Physical Planning Act. It consists of representatives of a large number of social organizations, the provinces, the municipalities, the drainage boards (polder boards, responsible for water management in a given area) and physical planning experts.

This council must be consulted on the broad lines and principles of the physical planning policy. It is not, of course, a policy making body, but one that, by providing a forum

for divergent views, can make a positive contribution to policy. Needless to say, the government is not dependent solely on the forms of consultation that are statutorily provided for. Physical planning is becoming more and more important for many and various organs of the community, each of which has its own view of the future. The new report on physical planning, with the structural map for the Netherlands, has been published precisely to feed this flow of ideas, and to put the interplay between the authorities and the public, between the government and Parliament, on a firm foundation.

well-being is going to depend more and more on the quality of the environment.

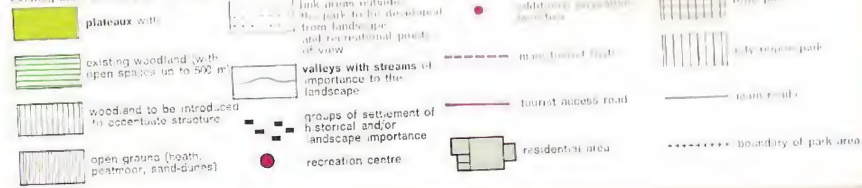
In the dialogue between the authorities and the public, between the government and Parliament, the main thing is to achieve a satisfactory balance between what are frequently opposite interests. The remarkable thing is that in many cases the conflicts of interests are not real, but are only felt to be so. They are apparent conflicts. An example of this is the antagonism between horticulture and urban development. The former imagines itself threatened by the expansion of the towns; yet it cannot exist without an urban population. Furthermore, it is in the interests of horticulture to produce its goods as close to the towns as possible. Quicker and cheaper sales channels, thus better conditions of competition, are the result. Another example is the antagonism between industry and recreation. Both make heavy claims on land in places where the demand for space is greatest. Industrialization is indispensable in a country whose population is growing as fast as that of the Netherlands, but it makes the human need for recreation grow more than proportionately. In the struggle to get industry established, recreation, with its less easily evaluated claims, has often come off second best, and decisions have been made which, from the point of view of profitable land-use, have not proved too happy on closer examination. But it is gradually being realized that these are not conflicting requirements, but requirements which complement and dovetail with each other. Without industrialization it is impossible to achieve greater prosperity, but unsatisfactory environmental conditions mean a poor industrial climate.

And, indeed, everyone agrees with these premises nowadays. Where difficulties arise, where there is friction in life, is on the personal or incidental plane. Here, general principles come into conflict with personal or group interests. Quite often, the basis of this conflict is the difference between 'long term' and 'short term.'

Physical planning is a long-term matter. That is both the strength and the weakness of planning policy. Short-term decisions are easier to explain and are accepted

Suggested layout for a national park on the Drents plateau.

Existing main structure of landscape to be considered for recreational purposes



more readily. However, a physical planning policy based on such decisions would be fatal to the unconstricted development of life in the society of tomorrow. Short-term decisions must therefore only be made against a long-term background.

◀ Drenthe is one of the northern provinces and originally had a scattered, agricultural population. It promises to become one of the most attractive natural areas in the Netherlands for the urban population.

Groningen — 170,000 inhabitants — is a rapidly-growing university town in the north of the country.



The proper development of the Netherlands is a matter of concern to every Dutchman.

A long-term physical planning policy can never be based on mere statistics. Even without disasters, trends occur in the life of the community which cannot be predicted. Long-term plans must therefore be constantly reviewed and, if necessary, revised. For a regular revaluation of available information is essential to give short-term decisions a proper basis.

A hundred years ago, the Netherlands numbered less than three million inhabitants. Fifty years ago there were over six million. It is now expected that in thirty or forty years' time there will be twenty million. A lot happened in the period between a hundred years and fifty years ago, but infinitely more things have changed in the last fifty years. What will things be like in thirty or forty years' time? At an international study conference held in Amsterdam in September 1966 on 'The Pattern and Forms of Urban Settlements in the Future', the Netherlands chairman, Mr. J. Vink, said:

'In all our plans for shaping urban areas, we are aiming at a moving objective; a living and working environment for a community in continuous evolution.'

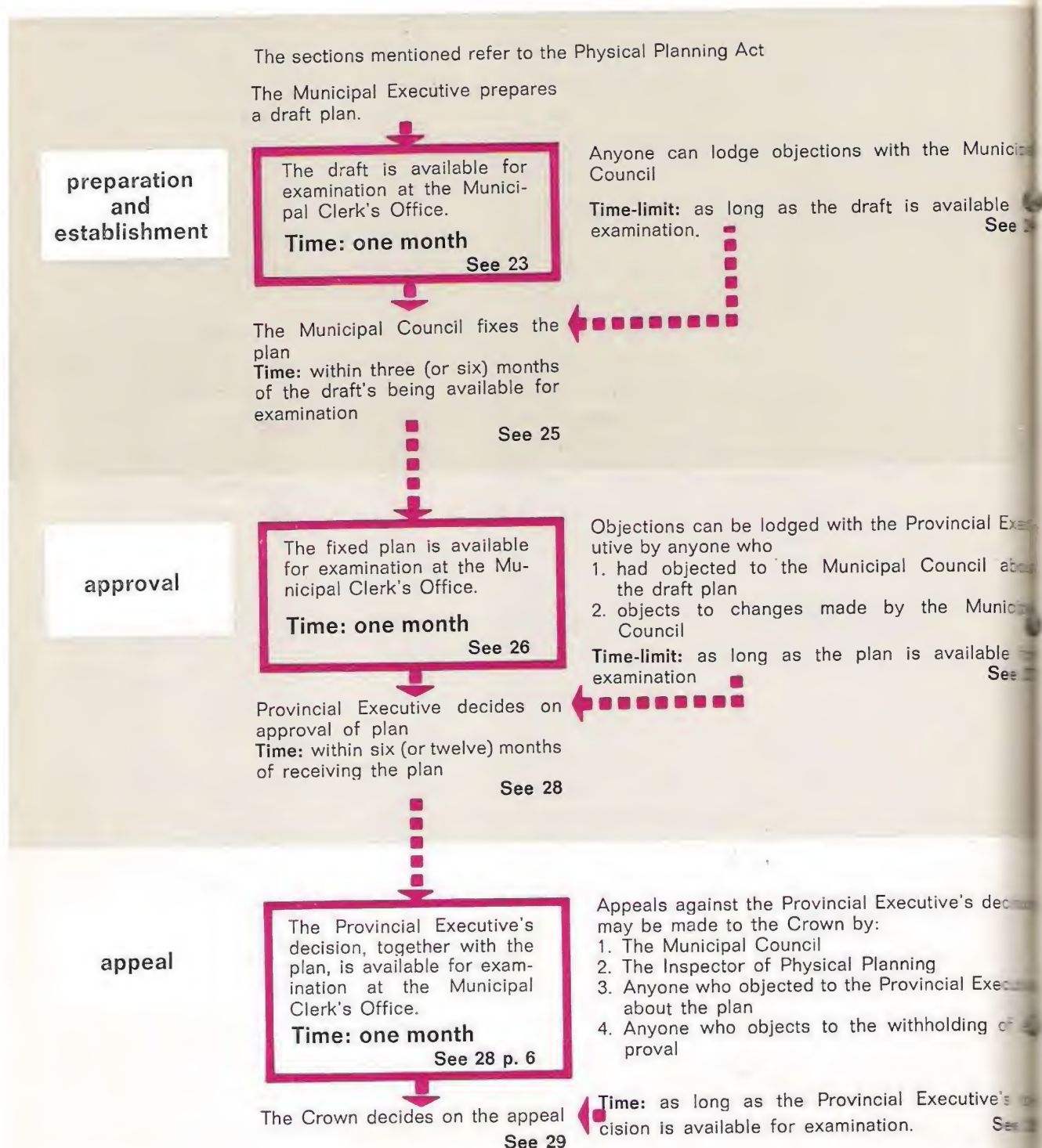
And:

'We are beginning to realize that we are not planning for a specific point in time, but for a process. Therefore, what we do must be open-ended rather than finite, flexible rather than strictly delimited.'

Mr. Vink also referred to the forecasts of economists. At the end of the century, the per capita income of the population will have at least double the purchasing power it has now. The lower income groups will then demand bigger and better-equipped dwellings, more space around their houses, weekend cottages, better recreational facilities, pure water, clean air and all manner of things at present beyond our imagining.

His conclusion was clear:

The statutory procedure for a municipal development plan.



'If we do not synchronise our plans for our urban environment with the constantly rising level of amenity demanded, we run the risk of building towns that will be regarded as sub-standard even before the trees in the streets have grown to their full height'.

This is the urban problem of today — the question of profitable land-use placed in the Netherlands context. The question is what is being done with all this knowledge, all this insight, all these figures, data and forecasts. It is already a difficult matter, even with today's hard figures, to get the measures implemented now which should have been ready yesterday. What circumstances of life await the young Dutchmen of tomorrow who will be growing up in a country with a population of twenty million?

It is a question the present generation must ask itself. Hence the second Government Report on Physical Planning in the Netherlands.

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The author

Rienk Idenburg (53) was born and bred in Amsterdam, but as a journalist he has lived and worked for several years in The Hague and Rotterdam. His varied urban background has — as he himself says — heightened his awareness not only of community issues but also of spatial matters. As a keen yachtsman, he knows the lakes of Holland, the lakes of Friesland and the waterways of South Holland and Zeeland. In the immediate post-war years, as information officer for the then Department of Reconstruction and Public Works, he was responsible for establishing the contacts between the Netherlands Government and the domestic and foreign press. He was also employed for a short time at the Bouwcentrum in Rotterdam. After working as a journalist for one of the larger Dutch dailies, he moved a number of years ago to the World Broadcasting Service at Hilversum. In addition, he has been the Dutch correspondent of The Guardian for over fifteen years.

The Book

Twenty million Dutchmen!
A nightmare?

Will the Netherlands, small country that it is, be able to offer 20 million inhabitants a



pleasant and healthy environment in which to live and work?

Experts say she will — if the use of land, of space, is not left to chance. Land has become far too precious in the Netherlands to be wasted.

How waste of land resources can be avoided, what is being done and what remains to be done to make the Netherlands a good place to live in, form the subject of this book.